Dear Santa,

We are from Waveland and our home was at:

[redacted] Edwards Street, Waveland, MS 39576

We are now living at:

Address: [redacted] Edwards Street

City WAVELAND State MS Zipcode 39576

Phone No. [redacted]

Our family consists of:

Carl S [redacted] JR (52)

Edwina WINNIE [redacted] (51)

ZACHARY DANIEL [redacted] (29) College Student Medical School

Our Katrina experience was:

form attached
picture Enclosed
this is How we found our Home
NO Door and the livingroom in
the yard.

Write something special that you would like Santa to bring you or your family:

we would be Thankful for any gift.
a Suprise is always Nice.
we only Hope the Childem will Have
a Wonderful Christmas.

Please use back or another sheet of paper, if you want to write more. We want to hear your story.

Return by November 30th to:

Mayor's Office, City of Waveland, P. O. Box 539, Waveland, MS 39576

Dear Santa:

On August 28th, 2005 upon waking up and finding that the storm Katrina was a category 5 and heading right for us, we had to make a plan about leaving and taking Carl's father with us. My husband Carl [redacted] Jr, Father-in law 78 years old Carl [redacted] Sr.who had a heart attack three week before hurricane Katrina and was staying with us until he could become stronger and could return home to live alone in Bay St. Louis. We also took our four dogs and two cats with us.

We began our adventure of trying to leave Hancock county and began a long drive to St. Joe Arkansas where we had a place to stay. We left at about 3:30 pm. On Saturday 28th. Our problem began on highway 59 at Lumberton with all lanes of traffic stopped no one was moving and almost all the car tag were of Louisiana, we hear on PBS radio that we could take state highway 13 and started to take the back road of our beautiful state to Vicksburg so we could cross the Mississippi river and get to highway 65. This drive should have only take 9 hours but instead it took 15 hours. With a person who just had a heart attack it was a long and stressful drive.

We arrived there in the early morning hours of August 29th at Bens Place and watched the news while we tried to find family members who were also trying to leave the state. Our family members had to stay behind because there was no gas and the roads were full with car tag from Louisiana. They had sat in traffic for 5 hours and could not get out the state without any gas on the coast. They had to return to our Street Edwards in Waveland. We could only pray to God that they were alive and wait. I asked God to save our family and friends that everything else was material stuff and he could have it all for their lives.

Only after the storm did we find out how bad it was on Edwards street with 29 feet of water hitting the beach south of the tracks and they had to ride the storm out on the roof of their home only two house down from our home. Our sister cindy, 17yrs Sarah, friend Andrea, 16yrs Anna and 19yrs a friend Ricky were all on there roof for 4 hours or more in all the cold rain and strong winds of Katrina. After the water started to go down they were able to get into a house behind ours it was a two story were they and other families who were trapped on our street spent the night.

The next day they had to walk out to find help. They hear there was a satellite phone working at St. Stanislaus and made a call to our family. Until we got that call I thought my Father in law was going to have another heart attack. God gave us what we asked for our family and friends lives.

Now we had no homes and a sick person on our hands. This began our new adventure to Stuart, Florida where my sister in law lived.
First we had to find a home for our four dogs and two cats to live, we had some friends the Newcom's in Romance Arkansas and they said bring them there so we took our pet to them were they spent two months until we could get a FEMA white castle and a fenced yard for them to be safe.

We started across country with our now growing sick father to our sister's home this took several days because we could only drive so many hours and he had to rest before we could go on. He stayed with our sister in law because we were all now homeless.

After our arrival in Stuart, Florida we stayed two days and went to the Red Cross for help to get us home by now we had drain our checking account and did not have money to get home on. We also went to the health department for our shots and medication that was need. We bought gas cans, gas, clothes, water and food.

This began our new adventure home to see for the first time what had happen to Edwards Street in Waveland. There was no news coming out of Hancock County because it was all about Louisiana. The only information was from friends we were able to speak with of how bad it was in Waveland.
It took us 17 hours to get into Hancock County because of all the damage to the roads. The drive into Hancock County on 603 the smell of death and destruction was almost too hard to take. My heart was broken by all the destruction everywhere. What our family and friends had gone through was now a reality because we could see it first hand.

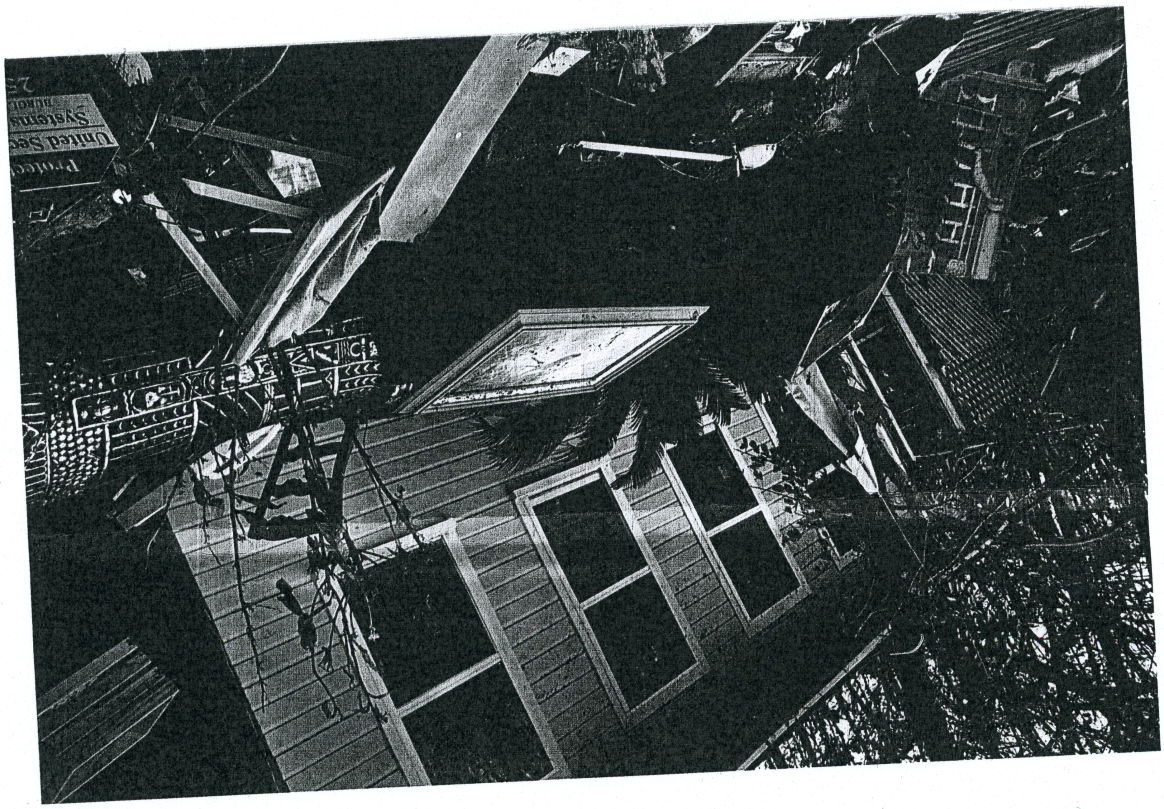
Edwards Street was north of the tracks but by the look of it that did not protect the homes they were all gone or almost gone like everything else in Waveland.
Our home was 17 feet above sea level in a no flood zone with out any flood insurance and we had 95 inches of water and mud inside. SBA now said it's a 100% total loss. Our loss is of everything we have worked for all our lives, our home, cars, pool, sheds, computer store (no insurance), and rental property (childhood summer home with flood insurance but missed the upgrade done on August 5 by nine days there a 30 days clause)

I am a second-generation hurricane survivor my parents were my age and had retired in our summer home in Clermont Harbor we were from New Orleans, I bought a home that was in a no flood zone because I watched my parents rebuild during there retirement years.
Now I am doing the same thing trying to rebuild our home and lives during a time when we should be enjoying life after all our hard work.

It will take us years to recover from this natural disaster trying to rebuild hoping to pay a home loan on a home that is no longer there. $1200.00 per month and no insurance to fix or rebuild. It will be a hard road to keep from losing our unlivable home to the bank and building a new home for the future.
Only time will tell how this will play out for so many people in the same fix as we are.

Our Grandfather Mayor [redacted] loved this town and spent years rebuilding it after 1969 hurricane Camille for our generation and it will take us to rebuild it for future generation of Waveland families. We can only hope and pray that some how we can all make our payments on our losses and rebuild some how with help for the federal government and other programs. We will all be in our 80's trying to pay off our homes.

I know what I went through as a teen in Hancock County after the summer of 1969 has made me a stronger person for the future and now I have to use that to try and over come the loss and destruction of losing everything again in 2005.
I can only pray and keep my faith in God that this will all be possible for the citizen of Waveland to rebuild for a future generation of citizen to take over and love this town like the passed generation has.

Thank you Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus for wanting to hear our story of how hurricane Katrina tried to destroy our lives and on how we hope to rebuild our lives in the future with the help of a lot of volunteers from all over America if it was not for all the wonderful groups of American we could not have even begun to rebuild.
Church groups from across American came to feed, clothed, medical care, cleaned out homes, gutted, and held us when we were down, prayed over us to give us the strength to go on.
We don't know what we would have done if it had not been for these American whom we did not know came to our rescue with unconditional love of fellow Americans.
I only hope you will bring them all a blessed Merry Christmas.

Thank you,
Edwina[redacted]
[redacted] Edwards Street
Waveland,Ms 39576
228-467-5561
228-209-5670